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THE

Banner of the Covenant.

MARCH, 1855.

Historical Sketches.

(For the Banner of the Covenant.)

THE CHURCH OF OUR FATHERS.

(Continued from page 6.)

II. The *development* of the First Reformation, A. D. 1559 to 1596.

It was while affairs were in so critical a condition that the celebrated John Knox returned to Scotland. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 54.) This eminent man was born near Haddington in 1505, and was early distinguished for his literary attainments and his piety; and before he had attained the canonical age of 25 years he was admitted to priest's orders. (Life of Knox, Free Church, p. 11.) His inquiring and honest mind soon, however, became dissatisfied with the Romish system, but the change was gradual; and it was not until his 38th year that he became fully a Protestant. But when he had adopted the Reformed system, he did so with his whole heart; and, advocating it with great earnestness, he was denounced as a heretic, and obliged to fly. About two years afterwards we find him acting as a kind of body guard to Wishart, on whom he attended with a two-handed sword, to protect him from the assassins whom the Romanists had employed to murder him. When Wishart was about to suffer, Knox begged to be allowed to remain with him, but the martyr exclaimed—"One is enough for a sacrifice," and dismissed him to his pupils. On the death of Cardinal Beaton, he took refuge with others in the Castle of St. Andrew's, where he occupied himself in instructing the pupils who had been placed under his care, after his accustomed manner. (M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 39.) His mode of instruction, as well as his doctrines, gave so much satisfaction that he was urged to preach publicly, but he refused on the ground of not having a proper call to the employment. At length Rough, who acted as chaplain in the Castle, after preaching a sermon in regard to the duty of a person to engage in the ministerial work when properly called upon, turned to Knox, and addressed him in the name of the audience, and charged him in the name of GOD and of his Son JESUS CHRIST, not to refuse to comply with the invitation to preach the gospel. Knox was overwhelmed at this unexpected address, and bursting into tears, withdrew from the meeting, and shut himself up in his chamber. He was led,

however, to regard this as a manifestation of the Divine will, and entered with zeal on the great work in which he accomplished so much good.

When St. Andrew's was surrendered to the French, Knox, with others, became a prisoner; and, contrary to stipulations, was treated as a galley-slave, and compelled to work at the oar. Many efforts were made in vain to induce the unhappy prisoner to recant. (M'Crie's Knox, p. 53.) One day, as Knox tells us in his history, a fine painted image of the Virgin was brought into one of the galleys, and handed to a Scotch prisoner, (probably Knox himself,) to kiss it. He desired not to be asked, and said such idols were accursed, and he would not touch them. The officer declared he should, and put it to his face. On this he took hold of the image, and threw it into the river, exclaiming—"Let our Lady now save herself; she is light enough, let her learn to swim." (M'Crie's Knox, p. 59.)

At the end of nineteen months Knox obtained his liberty; and going to England, remained there till the death of Edward VI. During this time he laboured with great acceptance, and was appointed one of the king's chaplains, and afterwards offered the living of All-hallows in London, and the bishopric of Rochester, both of which he declined, stating that he did not consider the Church of England sufficiently reformed, and consequently he could not accept a permanent charge in her connexion. (Knox, Free Church, p. 14.) On the death of Edward, and the accession of Mary, (1554-'5,) he was obliged to fly to the Continent; but he returned in the next year, and secretly repaired to Edinburgh. Here he preached with great success; and when the attempt was made to arrest him, his friends rallied round him in such numbers that it was abandoned. He was, however, not long after obliged to fly, and went to Geneva; whence, however, he was recalled by the urgent applications of his friends in Scotland, and returned in 1559.

The arrival of Knox infused new vigour and determination into the friends of the Reformation, whilst it intimidated their opponents. He immediately began to preach in various places, denouncing in the boldest manner the idolatry of Romanism, while he announced the pure and consoling truths of the gospel. The adherents to Reformation finding that the attempt was about to be made to suppress them by the civil power, drew up another bond or engagement, in which they formally renounced Popery, and pledged themselves to mutual defence of the true religion. They then demanded the reformation of the church, and agreed that each in his own place should abolish the Popish service, and establish the Reformed religion. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 58.) Assistance was obtained. The popular mind was thus prepared for the subversion of Romanism, and the earnest exhortations of the preachers led to the general removal of the emblems of Popish superstition. In some instances this, as might be expected, was attended with tumult and disorder; in others it was effected without disturbance. "Can any man suppose," asks Row, "that in so great an alteration in a kingdom, every man did every thing rightly?" (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 61.) At Perth, after Knox had preached a sermon against the idolatry of the mass and image worship, the priests began to celebrate mass. A boy uttered some

expressions of disapprobation, on which a priest struck him. The urchin then threw a stone at the priest, which struck one of the images. This excited the populace, who were lingering around; and immediately the altar, images, and all the ornaments of the church, were demolished; and the mob, or the "rascal multitude," as Knox calls them, hastened to the monasteries, which soon became smouldering ruins. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 56.)

In many other parts similar occurrences took place, but with less violence or disorder. Indeed, it is not surprising when we consider the bold and arrogant effrontery with which the Romanist clergy had treated the people for so long a time, that in the wildness of their emancipation they may have gone to some excesses. Nor do we consider it either an infringement of the sacred rights of conscience, or bad ecclesiastical policy, that the public and offensive exhibition of Romish idolatry should be prohibited, or that institutions should be levelled to the ground which are held exempt from the supervision and control of the civil law, and serve in many cases as prisons for unhappy and deluded men and women, who sigh in vain to regain the liberty which they sacrificed at the shrine of an unholy and cruel superstition. The saying of Knox was a wise one—"Down with the nest, else the crows will build in it again." We believe that the worship of Roman Catholics should be confined to their own churches, and that all monasteries and nunneries should be open to the inspection of legal officers, and that their inmates should have full liberty to withdraw whenever they desire to renounce their vows.

When the Parliament met in 1560 Popery was formally abolished, and Protestantism established, as the national religion. The ministers of the Reformed church presented to Parliament a brief summary of their doctrine, which was substantially the same as the Westminster Confession. A law was also passed prohibiting the celebration of the mass under severe penalties, amounting in extreme cases even to death. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 66.) This law, and others of a similar character, our Scottish brethren state in their Testimony, that they do not approve. (Scottish Test. Hist., p. 67.) It is, however, to be observed that they seem to have been in a great measure merely a dead letter, and it is a most pleasing fact that *not a single Romanist suffered death in Scotland on account of his religion*. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 68.) The resources of the church were confiscated by the Parliament, and one-sixth of them was appropriated for the support of the clergy of the Reformed church; but only a part of that was faithfully dispensed to them. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 73.) In fact, much that was worldly and wicked was mingled with the good in the civil establishment of the Reformation in Scotland.

The General Assembly held its first meeting in Edinburgh, Dec. 20, 1560: it consisted of 6 ministers and 34 laymen. It was maintained that the royal assent was not necessary to hold a meeting, nor was any royal commissioner present at any meeting for twenty years. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 69.) A plan of government called the First Book of Discipline was drawn up in this year; and though not ratified by the civil power, was regarded as a standard authority by the church. (M'Crie's Sketches, p. 74.) In this document it is stated that the ordinary officers of the church are four: the pastor, the

doctor, the elder, and the deacon. The pastor was to preach and administer the sacraments. The doctor was to lecture and teach, as a theological or academical instructor. The elder was to assist in the discipline and government of the church. And the deacon was to take the supervision of the financial affairs of the church, and attend to the wants of the poor. The management of each congregation was intrusted to the elders and pastor of the congregation; and Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly, exercised jurisdiction over the churches in less or more extensive districts, and throughout the kingdom. From the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of qualified ministers, it was considered expedient until Presbyteries should be fully organized, and pastors obtained for every congregation, that *superintendents* should be appointed, who should travel over such districts as were not properly provided with preachers, and to preach in vacant places, to plant churches, and to exercise a general supervision over the ministers and other ecclesiastical officers within their bounds. These superintendents were subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbyteries and inferior courts, and possessed no greater rank than other ministers. They were not diocesan bishops.

Such is a sketch of the early constitution of the Church of Scotland; and when we compare it with the cumbrous hierarchy of Rome, we are charmed with its simplicity, its liberty, its scriptural character. Imperfect it was admitted and felt to be, but it is a matter of surprise and gratitude that in such circumstances so much was accomplished.

Theological Discussions.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

THE TITLE OF D. D.

[Concluded from page 39.]

We took occasion in a former article to assign some reasons in favour of retaining the above title among the ministry of reconciliation. These of course were deemed valid, or they should not have been advanced. It was not considered, however, that everything was introduced into the discussion that might be, in the form of effective and convincing argument. Neither was it supposed that such had been our good fortune as even to detail the choice of the considerations that induce men approvingly to regard this matter. But our point had been gained if, by what was written, though feeble and indifferent, others were induced *now* to examine what promises *hereafter* to be thoroughly canvassed. It is freely admitted that already something has appeared relating to this question; but, if we mistake not, nothing yet has come to light of sufficient importance satisfactorily and decisively to settle it.

We approach now what we feel to be by far the most difficult, and what, perhaps, may be regarded the most interesting part, of such a discussion, namely, a faithful examination of the objections offered to giving titles of this description to ministers of God. We would gladly resign this examination into abler hands, were it possible now to do so. But this is impracticable. Having commenced the investigation, we shall endeavour to have it gone through with the success

our ability will allow. It shall be done, too, with all the perspicuity of which we are capable.

It is objected to this honorary title that it creates partial and invidious distinctions, and is thus at variance with true Presbyterianism, which contemplates ministerial parity. This has a tendency to subvert it.

Had not this been urged as an objection, from sources every way respectable, we should not have thought it worth while to give it even a passing consideration. Yet such is really the case, and with the impression, too, that it was powerful and difficult to answer. This imposes upon us the obligation to attempt it. The objection is founded, as we conceive, in an entire misapprehension. The nature and design of the degree have not been understood. Had they contemplated a subversion of equality, when bestowed, the practice of conferring it would be a dangerous one, and of serious import. We should then go in for its immediate and absolute annihilation. Far be it from us to frame apologies for a stale and usurped prelatism. We dislike anything that has such a tendency. But, then, we do not discover that this has. When and where has it manifested this to be its native tendency? We venture the reply of never! Nor can it of necessity evince such a spirit from its very nature. This will be evident if we reflect that it confers no power or authority. It carries with it no right to invest with episcopal functions. There is no more official privilege after it has been received than before. How absurd, then, to declare that it endangers ministerial parity, when it does not even disturb it! It has nothing to do with it. That which places the ministry upon equal footing, is "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Do universities or colleges propose to interfere with this when, by a title, they signify their appreciation of usefulness, learning, and ability? They do not. The objection is, as we have said, a misapprehension, and should not be urged.

But, then, again, the title is select, and but partially bestowed.

To this we reply, that this is indeed so, and we wish it were more so. Colleges and universities, for our relish, have of late become too generous by half in dispensing their favours. We could have wished them to have been more frugal and less disposed to be lavish of their honours. The title of D. D. should be given to ministers of eminence and distinction, and to none others. Then it is a custom justly honoured in the observance. This, it is true, will have the effect of singling them out, and giving them a prominence which others do not possess. It will, in fact, be saying that they are above their fellows. And this, according to our estimate of the matter, is right, because they are so from superior mental gifts and an uncommon endowment of Heaven. Some may not like the distinction made, but they have no right to complain. The thing has been so hitherto, and it is likely will continue to be so until time shall be no longer. It was so among the apostles, though, as to their office, they were all alike. Paul, in a needful vindication of himself to the Corinthian converts, thought proper to introduce the subject of such distinctions, by saying that he was nothing inferior to the prime and capital of his fellows. 2 Cor. xi. 5: "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the *very* chiefest apostles,"—'ὅτι οὐκ ἔλαττον, very much in the highest degree, pre-eminently. The mightily gifted, such as Paul, were the most distin-

guished; and this he does not hesitate to assert, though it is done in a modest way. Many would blame him, no doubt; but it was necessary to show that he was qualified in being set for the defence of the gospel. The same matter of distinction is more than hinted at, in striking, figurative phraseology, in the Epistle to the Galatians ii. 9: "James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars;" that is, supports—persons of authority, and having influence, such as did not belong to others. Their pre-eminence is signified thus by an appropriate term. Now, if all this was right among the apostles, it is right among the Christian ministry now, as we presume these considerations establish.

Another objection to this title is, that it is calculated to make the ministry proud and supercilious, and therefore it should not be conferred.

In answer to this, we observe that it is freely conceded there is enough of tendency to pride in the human breast without adventitious aid or help of any kind whatsoever. This seems to be the case especially where there is signal and extraordinary endowment. Paul tells us that something uncommon was requisite to keep him humble, and prevent self-elation, when highly favoured with visions and revelations from heaven. 2 Cor. xii. 7: "And lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." The apostle here states what might have been the occasion naturally of pride, had not grace prevented. But there are few who would be disposed to say, that the abundance of the revelations was the cause or agency in producing such a tendency as the grace of God effectually hindered by giving a thorn in the flesh. To declare this, would be to arraign God himself, as he was the author of these revelations. It was the apostle's indwelling sin that tempted him to pride, and not that he was tempted of God. In a similar way, anything, in itself excellent and valuable, may be made the occasion of evil, and be converted into that which is hateful and obnoxious. But this is very different from its intention. Now, if any of the ministry are made proud by this honorary title, such was not its design. The institutions which confer it intend it for good; and any other use that is made of it, is an iniquitous perversion of its design, and a base betrayal of reposed trust and confidence. The individual who is corrupted in any measure by this designation, or who suffers himself, on account of it, to suppose that he is better than others, must be of meager caliber, indeed, and shows himself to be altogether unfit to receive any such distinction. There should have been, as far as he is concerned, much greater discrimination exercised in dispensing the honour. If, on the other hand, we look at it where it has been properly bestowed, and given to ministers of character and experience, and whose abilities are known to be answerable to what is involved in the degree, we shall perceive no such pernicious results as those urged in this objection. After all, it might be well enough to inquire, that even as things are at present, is it not but seldom that any such thing as pride or hauteur is witnessed among clergymen who have this title? As far as our acquaintance goes, we do not know of a single instance. We find them to be Christian gentlemen of character and dignity, and not the subjects of servile pride and forbidding aspect.

We shall next consider another and totally different class of objections, and with this close the article. They are those that are drawn from the scriptures, and generally supposed by such as employ them to be quite unanswerable. We shall presently see, however, how far this representation is true, and entitled to belief.

The first testimony against such a practice, says the objector, was lifted up as early as the age of Job, that in all subsequent time others might be delivered from such a censurable custom. Thus, in the language of Elihu, this is clearly established. Job xxxii. 22: "I know not to give flattering titles: in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away." This, then, is one of the passages thus adduced.

In replying to the objection, we would ask, Is it certain this part of scripture will apply so as to discountenance the practice we think proper enough? May it not be that there is another interpretation to be given to this passage, relied upon and evidently supposed to be true and correct? We think there may. To our mind, its meaning is simply this. Elihu knew not, by way of approval, to employ alluring speeches and honeyed commendations to deceive men, and cause them to think themselves to be something that they were not; for by thus falsifying, in an attempt to mislead, God's great displeasure would be signally manifested in his speedy removal by death. This we find to be the true meaning, from similar passages found elsewhere in the scripture. Thus in Psalm xii. 3, such characters are so threatened: "The Lord shall *cut off all flattering lips.*" Thus, too, Ps. cxx. 3, 4: "What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper." If such, then, is the meaning of Elihu's timely hint to Job and his friends, it is well enough applied when such characters are considered as the threatening contemplates; but certainly we are of the opinion that it is not a little out of place to apply it to the honours that are bestowed upon worthy clergymen. Is there any attempt made to deceive by the existence of such a circumstance? and is the nature of it such as to warrant us in saying that it merits the judgments of Heaven? We here quote with pleasure, as corresponding with our own views entirely, the comment of a divine, of great distinction and celebrity. "By *flattering titles*, Elihu does not mean titles of civil honour and respect, which belong to men, and are in common use among men, according to the different stations of life men are in; for honour is to be given to whom it is due, and it is no piece of flattery to give men their proper and usual titles, as it was not in the Evangelist Luke, and in the Apostle Paul, Luke i. 3; Acts xxvi. 25; but he means such titles as do not belong to men, and are unsuitable to them, and only given them by way of flattery: as, to call a man wise and prudent, when he is the reverse; or, a holy, just, and good man, when he is a very wicked one." Relying upon this as true, the objection to the title of D. D., from the book of Job, is irrelevant, and consequently worthless. We dismiss it, then, without further consideration.

We shall, lastly, consider another passage, which is taken from the New Testament, and gravely urged as an objection. Like the one we have just disposed of, it is thought to be quite conclusive. It is as follows: Christ himself, in a very pointed address, condemned the practice, and commanded his disciples not to tolerate its use among

themselves. We quote the passage, as it occurs, Matt. xxiii. 8: "But be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." In a note on the passage, a celebrated divine has the following comment: "This title corresponds with the title 'Doctor of Divinity,' as applied to ministers of the gospel; and, so far as I can see, the spirit of the Saviour's command is violated by the reception of such a title, as it would have been by their being called Rabbi."

This, then, is the objection we are called upon to meet, and which appears so formidable. To give it just examination, we shall first regard it in its primary reference, and then in its application to the subject we now have under discussion. It seems necessary to do this; and we shall attend to it with as little tediousness of detail as possible. The occasion of this command arose from a circumstance. It had its origin in the shameful practice of the scribes and pharisees of the Saviour's own times, and against which he deemed it necessary effectually to guard his disciples. In what this practice consisted, and which was, no doubt, as habitual as it was intolerable, we learn from the preceding context of the verse quoted. This may be briefly summed up as follows.

The scribes and pharisees sat in Moses' seat, as his successors in office, to explain and enforce the law of God. This office they executed according to their own inventions, and with the utmost possible rigour. They usurped dominion over the human conscience, and sternly bade such as were beneath them to yield equal or superior obedience to their teachings, inventions, and traditions, as matters of authority. This obedience was to be greater than all other sources of rule—the scriptures themselves furnishing no exception. In addition to this, these officers were ambitious, and haughty, and exceedingly fond of distinctions, and of the emblems of an asserted superiority. Their desire for ostentation and homage led them to frequent the most public places of resort, where their vanity would be gratified, and their "itching ears" saluted with assumed titles of respect. Hence, says Christ, they "love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi." No wonder, then, that Christ directed against them indignant and scathing rebukes, and enjoined it upon his disciples not to copy after or imitate their example. This is the true history of the case in its primary allusion. And now, we naturally inquire, where is the parallelism or correspondence between this and the matter before us? This is meeting the question in its proper issue. For ourselves, we cannot see it in any one particular. If we look at the characters of the parties concerned, they are entirely dissimilar. The Saviour would not come to such a command from rehearsing the practice of his own ministry. And yet, to make out a complete parallel, this in so far seems necessary. Can it be said that it does not? We leave this for candid minds to decide.

Or if, again, we contemplate the titles respectively of the parties, we think it will be difficult to trace an analogy. In all honesty, we declare that we cannot perceive in what respect "the title of Rabbi, as used by the scribes and pharisees, corresponds with the title Doctor of Divinity," as applied to ministers of the gospel. They still appear to us essentially different—so different, indeed, that the command of

Christ cannot be made to apply towards discountenancing the use of the latter. Let us compare them for a moment, and see if this is not so. The title of the pharisees was self-assumed, and employed to suit their ambitious designs and purposes: the title of the ministry is honourably conferred, and is used for the glory of God, in giving them influence with men. The one is held as a term of office; the other is purely literary, and a token of respect. The former means master, or lord; the latter simply signifies a teacher, or one who instructs, without disposition to lord it over the heritage of God.

Besides all this, (enough at any time to invalidate an analogy, so as not aptly to correspond,) the injunction of the Saviour had a very specific application, and that was to the abuse of titles, such as the pharisees were guilty of. This we are constrained to believe, from the command of the ninth verse: "And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven." Must we apply this to all fathers here? Certainly not. It must have had a very limited application, and would properly belong to desecrations of this endearing appellation. This, then, is what Christ denounced in his authoritative direction to the disciples, not that they should eschew the use of proper designations, which are intended for valuable purposes, and in many respects are necessary. But we need not further follow the subject. We shall dismiss it for the present with a single observation. From all that has been offered here, it will appear that, to receive such a title as D. D., is not inconsistent with the character of the gospel ministry. It is not, more especially, a violation of the letter or spirit of the Saviour's command. We should, indeed, be sorry to think this were so. It would affix a lasting stigma upon the cherished memories of many of the noblest of God's ministers. Their names shed an unfading lustre upon the brightest page of history. They passed to their reward, leaving behind them the precious legacy of a pure fame and a spotless life. Shall we now enter the chambers and disturb the ashes of these mighty dead? No; we cannot do so. We shall still think of them, as in life, wearing merited honours, and in death descending to the grave in peace, and in full hope of the resurrection of the just.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

LITERATURE AND RELIGION.

Literature and religion have always had a cotemporaneous existence. At times one has been greatly exalted, and the other as greatly depreciated. During some periods, literature has been extolled as the chief good, and religion seems scarcely to have been recognised as a thing worthy of the consideration of an immortal mind. At other periods religion has been wonderfully exalted, and literature greatly depressed. That there has always existed a close relation between them none will deny, who is at all conversant with the history of mankind. The object of this essay is to take a brief glance at that relation. For the sake of observing a chronological arrangement, we shall first speak of the connexion subsisting between literature and the religious world, previous to the Christian era. And when we turn our attention to this, the first thing that engages our notice is the important truth, that the scriptures of the Old Testament,

claiming as they do, to be the guide of the ancient religious world, are at the same time, the depository of the literature of the ages in which they were penned. Were it not for the religion of those times and the rich legacy that it has bequeathed to us, it would now have been a subject of mere conjecture, whether the world at that period possessed any literature at all. It is in the sacred oracles alone that this literature is to be found.

Moses, the great Jewish law-giver, was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt. He was perhaps indebted to the learning of that land, which has been styled the cradle of literature, for the very characters in which he wrote the history and laws of Israel. The writings of Moses are so enriched with gems of a literary kind, that it seems folly to attempt by quotation to present their beauties. Almost the very first sentence has been quoted by a heathen rhetorician, as a most admirable specimen of sublimity. And God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." To show how the writings of Moses are enriched by the rarest gems of literature, I shall venture to give one quotation, from the blessing that he pronounced upon Israel, immediately preceding his ascent to the top of Pisgah, when after viewing the promised land, his soul took its flight to heaven. I shall omit some of the words supplied by the translators, as they impair the force and beauty of the original. The passage is as follows: "None like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God thy refuge, and underneath thee the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone. The fountain of Jacob, upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy thou O Israel! Who like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread on their high places." This passage is of such surpassing beauty, that it needs no comment. Many more of a like nature could be presented in the writings of Moses. And this richness of style, and beauty of diction, runs through the whole of the sacred writings of the Jewish nation. The book of Job, of equal if not greater antiquity than the five books of Moses, is a poem unrivalled by the productions of any Grecian or Roman poet. And this epic poem, by far the most ancient extant, abounds not only in beauties, but these beauties are drawn from the various departments of Natural History and Astronomy. Its writer was beyond all doubt well versed in the literature and science of Egypt and Arabia, and his learning has been largely drawn upon, in the composition of this poem. There is scarcely a branch of knowledge that has not been brought into requisition. The history of birds, of beasts, and of fishes, the philosophy of rain, and of hail, mineralogy, astronomy, all contribute to the beauties of this most ancient composition. Who has not read with delight, and an admiration approaching to enthusiasm, the enchanting description of the wisdom contained in the 28th chapter of this book? "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding. Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx or the sapphire. No mention shall be made of coral or pearl, for the

price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. Whence then cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding? Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. Destruction and death say, We have heard of the fame thereof with our ears. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof." Or the following, in which Job acknowledges the infinite and unsearchable power of God. "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the clouds are not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea by his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens—his hand has formed the crooked serpent. Lo these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him! But the thunder of his power who can understand?" But other portions of the Old Testament are equally as rich with literary gems as the portions to which we have referred. Who has not admired the sublime strains of David, Isaiah, or Habakkuk. The terse and sententious maxims of Proverbs, and the lovely and poetical imagery of the Song of songs. As an example from the latter, take the following: "Until the day break and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."

"Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' den, from the mountains of the leopards." "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphor with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon; with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." Many have read with admiration that passage in the immortal *Æneid* of Virgil, where the winds are represented as shut up in caves, and bellowing, and howling on account of their confinement. But whilst they have admired this heathen poet, they have perhaps forgotten that the winds were personified, and spoken of in language far more grand, by the shepherd King of Israel, and his philosophic son, Solomon. In the close of the passage just quoted, the winds are represented as sleeping, and are called upon to awake, and come from the north and south. And David speaks of the winds, as having the wings of a bird, and flying through the air, in that sublime psalm in which Jehovah is represented as riding upon a cherub, and flying on the swift wings of the winds. I shall add but one more passage as an illustration of the literature of the Old Testament; it is taken from the prophecies of Habakkuk, third chapter, and is one of the grandest specimens of composition to be found, either in sacred literature, or the literature of heathen nations. It is entitled, A prayer of

Habakkuk on Shigionoth. A portion only is given as a specimen of the whole: "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations, and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the waters passed by; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of thine arrows they went, at the shining of thy glittering spear." In this passage, the pestilence and burning coals are personified, and represented as going forth before the Almighty, as the messengers of his wrath. Mountains are represented as trembling—perpetual hills as bowing—the overflowing of waters as passing by—the deep as uttering its voice, and lifting up its hand—the sun and moon as standing still, and then going forth. But we cannot pursue these quotations farther. The above are such as occurred as a few of the illustrations of the exalted diction and high literary character of the Old Testament. From this we see something of the relation that subsisted between religion and literature in the ancient ages of the world. We see that God's chosen people, who were the depositaries of the oracles of God, were also the depositaries of the literature of the age in which they lived. We see that the Spirit of God has not despised this literature, but has used it for powerfully illustrating and enforcing the truth of God. And that holy men of old, speaking as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, have left on record, a purity and sublimity of diction, unsurpassed, and indeed never equalled by any thing that the loftiest genius has ever yet conceived. The literature of these times is so inwrought into the sacred oracles, that the one cannot exist without the other. And thus it is that with the greatest confidence we can affirm, that the literature of the Hebrews is immortal.

(To be continued.)

Practical Essays.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

PEACE.

"That in me ye might have peace."—John xvi. 33.

The true believer in Christ daily experiences that there is a source of consolation in the Christian religion, which far surpasses all that earth can give. He feels that, amid the changing scenes of life, he has naught to fear; for he has a Guide that can direct, and a Friend that will bring deliverance in every time of need. And when the clouds of adversity overhang his path, he goes forward undismayed, having his trust in God, and knowing that he will do all things well. Amid all the cares of life, he realizes that peace which God has promised to his people, and finds in divine revelation a balm of consolation for every affliction, a joy for every sorrow, and a solace for every grief. Whatever may be the circumstances that arise in life's journey, whatever be the condition in which believers may be placed, yet

still there is a fulness for all their varied wants, a source of consolation for all their sorrows, and words of comfort, which Christ has spoken unto them, "that in him they might have peace."

The sinner, when brought to a knowledge of his own wretchedness, and feeling his insufficiency to deliver himself from the curse of the law that hangs over him, cries out, in despondency, "O! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" But when thus left without hope, the Comforter appears, and, revealing to him the words of inspiration, leads his desponding mind to Him who is the "Prince of peace," and "who came to speak peace unto his people." And now the eyes of his understanding are enlightened, the words of truth beam into his mind, and he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. And when the troubled spirit is tossed by the rough waves of uncertainty and fear, and when beneath the dark clouds of doubt that overshadow its path, it is about to wander from its heavenward course, and be shattered upon the soul-destroying rocks of unbelief, then He, who calmed the ragings of the sea of Galilee, draws near, and speaks unto its troubled mind, "Peace, be still!" and immediately there is a great calm. The clouds that obstruct its vision now recede, the sun bursts forth with all its brilliancy, and it goes safely on its course, rejoicing in a lively hope.

The Christian, as he pursues his way to Zion above, finds his love toward his Saviour to be constantly increasing, and feels that his faith is gradually growing stronger in Him who gives deliverance in every time of need. The more the trials that beset his steps, the more the troubles that annoy his mind, the nearer does he cling to Christ, and the greater is the consolation that he experiences from those "exceeding great and precious promises" which Christ has given to his people, "that in him they might have peace." Though he may be poor in this world's goods, though his home may be a peasant's cot, yet he feels he has an inheritance that fadeth not away, and a house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Though the gaunt form of penury may stare him in his face, yet still his confidence in God remains unshaken; for he knows that He who feeds the young ravens when they cry, hath also promised "that they who fear the Lord shall not lack any good." He therefore casts all his cares upon God, knowing that he has a Father in heaven who careth for him, and who will supply all the wants of his children out of his divine fulness. And when the losses and disappointments of life beset him, and when his frail bark is tempest-tossed amid the raging billows of adversity, yet all within is calm; for—

"Though hills amidst the seas be cast,
Though waters roaring make,
And troubled be—yea, though the hills
By swelling seas do shake,

yet does he feel no danger, for he knows that God is his refuge and his strength, and that he will give deliverance in every time of need. Even when afflictions draw near to him, he goes joyfully forth to meet them with peace and resignation, being assured "that all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are called according to his purpose." He feels that these are but the chastisements of his Heavenly Father's hand, and that amid them all God will manifest himself in love; for while he afflicts with the one hand, he will

uphold with the other; and while he sends sufferings in the body, he will cause the immortal spirit to soar above the things of time, and give to the soul more powerful impressions of his love. He will awaken within it more tender emotions of gratitude, and cause hope to brighten before the prospects of immortality and bliss. He turns the season of affliction into a time of rejoicing, and causes the believer to come forth from it purified for his service. And, moreover, when he afflicts with heavy hand, and severs those strong ties of affection which bind some loved object to the heart, even then he forsakes not, but enables the loving parent, while he weeps by the grave of his tender offspring, to raise his eyes toward heaven in peaceful resignation, and exclaim, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The widow he upholds in the time of her calamity; and though her earthly stay be removed, yet he leaves her not in want, but tenderly upbids her broken heart, and speaks peace unto her troubled spirit. The orphan, when cast without a friend upon this cold and heartless world, is not left alone. But He, who is a Father to the fatherless, gives consolation amid all its trials, calms every fear, and guards it from every danger that be-sets its step.

To the believer, Christ is a constant Friend throughout the whole journey of life; and he passes through its various stages but to experience new blessings from his hand. When the infirmities of age creep upon him, and he approaches to the brink of the grave, then his joyous spirit soars on eagle's wings, and with renewed strength he runs in his heavenward course and is not weary, he walks and is not faint. And when his last foe draws near, he looks forward to the approaching conflict without a terror, and exclaims, "I would depart and be with Christ." He goes not—

"Like the quarry slave at night
Scourged to his dungeon,"—

but "sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust" he approaches the grave. Death to him has been deprived of all its stings, and the grave has been robbed of all its terrors. What calmness reigns around this closing scene of life! No mental agonies, no convulsive agitations disturb his rest, but "the end of that man is peace." Behold how gently the immortal spirit takes its flight! As death lays his icy hand upon his brow, in triumph he gives thanks to God, "who giveth him the victory through Christ Jesus." And as the vital spark leaves his weakened frame, he falls asleep as if to pleasant dreams, and a heavenly smile circles round his lips.

This is a victory which is not of earth, a conquest which human power cannot give. Wealth cannot purchase it, the whole world cannot furnish it, but Christ alone bestows it. Christianity is a system which could not have originated with man, for human wisdom cannot comprehend it. No earthly speculations, no human theories could afford that consolation which the gospel gives, but when man was left without hope, and when eternal misery threatened him, then Christ came that he might procure salvation with all its blessings for his people, and "*that in him they might have peace.*" H.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

LENGTH OF SERMONS.

MR. EDITOR,—The following thoughts have often passed through my mind. If you think them worthy of a place in the Banner, give it to them; if not, lay them aside, and it will give no offence to the writer.

Sermons long, Sermons short, What is the proper length? The length of a sermon is not absolute, but relative. It cannot be measured by hours and minutes; it should be regulated, as to time, by the state of the congregation, and the subject of the discourse. The time was, when a short sermon was likely to give offence, to subject the preacher to the imputation of weakness, without he was a young man, or was lately licensed. When opportunities of hearing the gospel preached were rare, like angels' visits, few and far between; then vacant congregations, or settled ones, where pastors were often called from home, liked to have a "day's preaching," and a day's preaching it was, commencing at 11 o'clock, A. M., and continuing until about two, and often half an hour or more of an interval, resuming public worship, and continuing till about five, P. M. Then congregations assembled, from considerable distances, heard with an appetite, conversed about the lecture and religious subjects during the interval, spake to one another on the way home, as to the text and doctrine; and frequently during the week, in their occasional interviews, improved their meetings by a reference to the work of the past sabbath. In those days there was much of what was termed, doctrinal and experimental preaching. Sermons had a body, they had a *beginning*, *middle* and *end*. They were not speeches—an exhortation—a something to entertain; the idea of both speaker and hearer, was, that the "sanctification of the sabbath" required that the whole of the sabbath should be spent, except what was called for, by works of necessity and mercy, in duties public or private. The public worship, while it made all due allowance for domestic duties, did occupy a reasonable portion of the sabbath, both in the fore and afternoon. Sermons, lectures, in these days, and under these circumstances, were necessarily long. But now preaching is more abundant. It is reasonable, that it be not so long as when scarce. Now ministers are loaded with a host of duties, which pastors formerly were not called to perform. The very demands of voluntary societies would absorb the whole of a minister's time, if he permitted it. The claims, by way of social visitation, are also becoming oppressive, and even ruinous. What time has a minister, after the numerous, and we shall say, often frivolous calls of the week, to prepare a suitable meditation on a psalm, a well-digested lecture, and a substantial discourse, both doctrinal and practical? The minister is compelled to be short, and often unsatisfactory to himself, or he has to omit part of his work, or apply to some half-employed brother, in another church, who has things always *cut and dry*, to help him out of his extremity. A friend in need, is, to him, a friend indeed. Thus it goes, and thus we get short sermons, or no sermons, or a word in season from the strange minister, or some wandering agent of this or the other benevolent society.

Now when we think of the past, and consider the present, what shall we say, as to sermons, long or short? As to the past, the cir-

cumstances of the case called for, and justified long sermons, longer than propriety would now warrant. Yet when we consider the end of preaching, viz.: The conversion of sinners the edification of the body of Christ, the exhibition and defence of the faith of the gospel, who can say that sermons of 20, 30, and 40 minutes, are likely to accomplish the end, for which the Redeemer has established the ministry? While, then, we keep in mind the end of preaching, not to entertain a congregation for an hour, but to teach what Christ has commanded to be taught, and that the end of hearing, is to hear what God the Lord has commanded ministers to speak, we judge that sermons and lectures should be neither long nor short, but a medium, a reasonable length, so as to promote edification, and the various other ends of a preached gospel. Farther, we think it not a favourable sign of any hearer, to hear him complain of long sermons, or to be looking at the clock, or his watch every few minutes. It makes us think of the man of old, who was detained in the house of God. We like to hear men say, "I heard the word gladly." "It was the joy and the rejoicing of my heart." "Ever more give us this bread."

M.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

THE SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY.

Of the various subjects occasionally brought before the people, in all the different sections of Presbyterianism, whether in the form of the sermon, the popular lecture, or through the press, that which we have selected as the subject of the present communication to the readers of the "Banner" appears to be less frequent—from common report less palatable, and from actual observation less popular, than any of the almost innumerable themes presented as above: though in fact, in the present day, it is a *desideratum* of the greatest moment to the church, and to the world. It is a lamentable fact, that the Theological Seminaries of the various Presbyterian churches in our land, present a meager aspect, when compared with former days in the number of their students; this is seen not only in the list—it is heard not only from the report—it is the subject not only of private, of congregational, of presbyterial, and of synodical comment, but it speaks more loudly to the world, in the fact that the voice of almost two thousand ministers, on a day set apart for this specific object, are to be heard pleading with God, that almost two thousand congregations are clothed in sackcloth, and "laying hold of the horns of the altar," in view of the deficiency of candidates for the ministry of the gospel, and the "ripeness of the harvest, praying, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest," and this church is by no means solitary, for "the famine is spread over all the land." We naturally inquire, Whence this state of things? Is it that the object of the church's organization is so nearly completed, that additional labourers are not required? or is it, that grace has departed from the sons of the pious parents? We believe it is neither; for the church is but entering upon the evangelization of the world; and far be it from us even to suppose, that the heart of the merchant, the manufacturer, the mechanic, or the husbandman, does not feel as warm as that of many of those who are "spending and being spent" in the ministry.

To a very large extent do we trace the present scarcity of candidates for the ministry, to the altogether inadequate support upon which they are compelled to live; we are aware that the scarcity of theological students is traced to various other sources; but were the prospect of poverty and with many almost literal starvation removed from the ministry, the list would be rapidly increased; it may be said, by some shrewd man of the world, if this be the case, then the object of the ministry is "the loaves and the fishes;" but let this noble advocate of sacrifice on the part of the ministry, abandon the counting-house or the farm, and live on the veriest pittance on which many of the noblest in the ministry are living, and we will soon realize that with him at least "second thoughts are best:" this is the conclusion to which men and the church are coming, that until some effort for the better support of the ministry be made, it is in vain to expect an increase, and this conclusion from force of circumstances is pressing itself rapidly upon the people. Says a writer on this subject, in *The Chicago Evangelist*, "Within the last two months, I have heard of a young man, the son of a clergyman, a professor of religion, seemingly a good young man, a member of — college to whom the subject of entering the ministry was introduced of late, by his own parents and pious sisters. To the question put to him, whether it was his purpose to study theology, he promptly answered, 'No. I can never feel it to be my duty to enter a profession, in which I shall in all probability be called to suffer all I have seen my own father suffer.' A short time since, a father, an elder in the Presbyterian church, was asked whether he should exert his influence to induce a son of his, who was then in college, to enter the ministry? he answered at once, "I shall do no such thing. I shall use my influence in another direction. I am unwilling that my son should be subjected to the mortification and disgrace of trying to bring up a family on the salary furnished now-a-days, to the ministers of the gospel." Now, we may say, all this is very wrong. Be it so, it does not alter the fact, and the fact is what we are after; the fact that the salaries of four or five hundred dollars, and poorly paid at that, are thinning out the ranks of candidates for ordination. A shrewd lawyer remarked to the writer not long since that the "clerical profession had lost all its dignity." "Admitting it to be true," said I, "what is the cause of it?" "The beggarly salaries on which its members are content to live;" he answered; "The world will measure men by what their services will command, and they value a profession by the same rule; and if a man now-a-days is willing to work for four or five hundred dollars, it looks very much like those we read of in old times, who cravingly said, 'Put me into the priest's office, that I may eat a piece of bread.'" We live in a commercial age, a commercial country. In spite of all we can do, the "quid pro quo" principle, will more or less influence the popular mind. The stinted stipend of its incumbent, will have the effect to belittle the importance, and lower the dignity of the sacred office, and thus keep men out of it. No man is required to do injustice to himself and his family. No man has a right to sacrifice his honour; and yet to serve the gospel in nine-tenths of our churches is to do both of these things; his family must suffer, his credit must suffer, his feelings must suffer; he is never out of debt, he cannot educate his children, he is half-frightened out of his wits at

the thought of being compelled to take a journey, he must beg for half-fare tickets, telling the high official, he is a "minister," alias a pauper, if he can't get "hawked through," as a "dead head," or get along on half-fare, he must stay at home or go in the "tiger car." If he wants a hat or coat, he must debate the question at least a month or two before venturing to "dip in so deep a speculation." If he wants a book, the penalty is the old greasy cravat six months longer; the only jubilee days he has, are when he gets a wedding fee, or deacon Big-heart sends him a turkey. He is always in trouble, and with David can ever say, "When wilt thou comfort me? For I am become like a bottle in the smoke." This is indeed a sorry picture, but we doubt not it is the case with hundreds of men in the United States, who are "serving at the altar of the gospel," men who spent all their time previous to manhood in preparation for the discharge of the duties of the office with which they are invested, men who for talent will, at least, compare favourably with those in any other profession, and men who for devotedness and self-sacrifice, stand as a monument to the world. To what source, we again ask, can be attributed the cause that their ranks are rapidly thinning? Let the church but provide a common sustenance, and she may expect a supply; but apart from the fear of a charge that the ministry are becoming selfish, we hesitate not to affirm that a *liberal* maintenance is *due* to those that labour in the word and doctrine, and that not out of mercy, but out of justice to their work's sake, based too on the authority of the "higher law;" for as Bishop Reynolds well says on this subject, "God is not less mindful of ministers under the gospel, than of those under the law." Now then, if any did not believe that a liberal maintenance is now by God allotted to the ministry, look what he did allot unto them; first, look upon the proportion of their persons, and then upon the proportion of their maintenance. It would not be hard to prove that the tribe of Levi, though the thirteenth part of the people in regard of their civil division, were not yet the fortieth part of the people. One would think that the fortieth part of the people could require but the fortieth part of the maintenance in proportion. But first, They had the tenth of all the increase of seed and fruit, and great and small cattle. Secondly, They had forty-eight cities with suburbs for gardens, and for cattle, which cities were next to the best, and in many tribes the best of all, in Judah, Hebron, in Benjamin, Gibeon, both large cities; so that these with about a mile of suburb to every one of them, can come to little less than the wealth of one tribe alone, in that little country which from Dan to Beersheba was about a hundred and fifty miles long. Thirdly, They had all the first fruits of clean and unclean beasts; of the fruits of the earth, and the fleece of the sheep; of men to be redeemed. Fourthly, The meat offerings, the sin offerings, the trespass offerings, the heave offerings, and the wave offerings, were all theirs. Fifthly, They had all vows and voluntary obligations, and consecrations, and every hallowed thing. Sixthly. Excepting the Holocaust, they had either the shoulder, or the breast, or the skin, or something of every sacrifice which was offered. Seventhly, The males were to appear three times a year before the Lord, and they were not to come empty handed. Lastly, Unto them did belong many recompenses of injury, which was the restitution of the principal, and a fifth part. Now, put the tithes,

the cities, and the other constant revenues together, and the priests and the Levites, who were but a quarter as many as one tribe, had yet about three times the revenue of one tribe." On a future occasion we will ask the attention of the readers of the "Banner" again to this subject, and present some additional argument for the "support of the ministry" under the gospel; for verily, in our church, as in others, the necessity exists in many quarters, not only of fervent and earnest prayer to God, that he would raise up good men and true, and "full of the Holy Ghost," and send them forth as labourers into the harvest, that through the influence of the sickle of truth as wielded by them, the wheat might be gathered, but that, also, "He would open the hearts of the people, and give them grace enough just to give unto the labourer his hire."

(To be Continued.)

Miscellaneous.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

LETTER FROM REV. H. M'MILLAN.

Liverpool, Oct. 16, 1854.

Mr. Editor,—My last to you was from Belfast, Ireland. I write you again from this place, after having made a brief excursion to London, and other places in England. What I write, are rather primary impressions than established sentiments or facts.

When the traveller enters England, he feels that he is approaching the throne. The beloved queen, as she is generally called, is everywhere in Great Britain and Ireland spoken of with great enthusiasm. But as we pass through England, the signs of royalty begin to multiply. Everything appears to be managed so as to impress the mind with more than an ordinary awe and respect for the throne and its appendages. At times we were made to remember the words of the royal Psalmist: "Surely each man walketh in a vain show:"—

Surely mean men are vanity, and great men are a lie.
In balance laid, they wholly are more light than vanity.

And yet, far be it from me to suggest any other idea as to the character, forms, and modes of government, than to render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour: fear God, and honour the king. Yet to an American, whose ears and mind are familiar with the language and sentiments of "the republican," the idea that a man is born to rule, because he has in his veins a certain current of blood, or that a woman, because she is the heir, is to be exalted as the queen of the empire—this idea, I say, strikes his ear and mind somewhat queerly. Still, if the people will have it so, let them have it; and yet, as a friend of a witness for the purity of civil government, as well as of ecclesiastical, it is not out of place to say, that the British government, as at present constituted, is grossly corrupt in its civil as well as its ecclesiastical constitution; and that it behooves to be greatly reformed before it can yield them the pleasant fruits of a morally constituted government. This, we hesitate not to say, even though the beloved queen be the occupant of the throne, than whom, perhaps, few of her sex have been more worthy to occupy her present position.

In England, the engrossing topic is the Eastern war. I have frequently endeavoured to find out the cause of the war—the justifiable reason why, in this nineteenth century, so many thousands and hundreds of thousands are to be led from their homes to the field of battle, of blood, and of death. As yet, I have to hear of any justifiable reason for the war. The true cause is enigmatical. Truly, there is an assigned reason; the haughty, the grasping power of the Czar; his aspirations for power; his aggressions on Turkey, are at variance with the balance of power in Europe—with the success of British manufactures and commerce, in Europe and around the world; therefore he must be arrested by the allied armies. But will even this justify the horrors of the war, so shocking to themselves and to their enemies? To some minds it may be a justification. But there is a wheel within a wheel, and when all shall be known, a Joab's hand is in it. Behind the curtain is Jesuitical counsel, directing the measure. But whatever man may mean, God designs to effect by it the execution of his counsel, to execute the vengeance due for blood that has been innocently shed. When the Lord maketh inquisition for the blood of his saints, as he will, the thrones of the allied armies have much to answer for. The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice.

In England, the church, or churches, exist in a somewhat different position from what they are in Ireland and Scotland. True, the established church in England and Ireland is the same—the Episcopal church. But the established church in no land is “the church;” it is a church, but not even “the church” for moral power, neither in Scotland nor in England. Many of the dissenting churches are far in its advance, for doing good; and why then is there an established church at all? It has arisen out of the past state of things in the British government: the notion was, and still is, to a great extent, no government like a monarchical one; and in connexion with it, no church can do well, unless established. Besides, in days past, much property was left, by its owners, as a legacy to the church; thus there has grown up an immense property owned by the church: this goes into the establishment, and creates the immense funds for the use of Bishops and other dignitaries: any attempt to change would be in effect a revolution.

But as I said, even in England the established church is not “the church” of moral power. England is the country where Cromwell ruled—it was the land of Puritans; independency struck deep its roots. Here still the Puritans are felt for good. And were I asked, what is “the church” of moral power in England, I would hesitate to answer, I could not answer, the Independents, though, numerous and powerful, so are the Methodists—the Baptists—the Presbyterians. The Presbyterians of England, though comparatively small, are greatly on the increase. Aided by their brethren of Scotland and Ireland, they are taking, everywhere, root, in cities and in country are every where felt for good, and if the signs of the present day are not mistaken, Presbyterianism is one day to leaven, to reform England.

One fact is highly gratifying, with regard to all the churches, that notwithstanding the tendency of many, especially in the Episcopal church, to verge towards Popery, yet there is, in all the churches, a counteracting power, a strong vital power of spirituality, and while this power, it is believed, is on the increase, there is a corresponding

increase of brotherly love—a feeling that each church has a work to do, in the salvation of sinners, which the other cannot do; and a wide-spread belief, that there is a necessity for greater unity and co-operation, before the church or churches, can effect that reformation in the world, which Christianity is destined to effect.

Of this state of things, I cannot give you a better illustration than that which is found in the existence and labours of the British Evangelical Alliance for the last eight years. This Alliance was formed in London, in the year 1846, by some of the head men of that day, from the different portions of the Christian world. It consisted of 920 persons, of whom 786 were of Great Britain and Scotland; 87 from the American Continent and Isles; and 47 from the Continent of Europe. The design of this Alliance at first, was to hold periodical meetings at different places, in Christendom, according to adjournment, composed of members from different organizations. These separate organizations were expected to exist in Great Britain and Ireland, in the United States of America, in France, Germany, Switzerland, British North America, and the West Indies. These separate organizations were very partially formed, except the one in Great Britain and Ireland. It was organized, has held its meetings annually; the eighth meeting of which was held in London this month, on whose exercises and deliberations we had the pleasure of attending. The above meeting to me was very pleasant, as much so, as any event of my visit, and not the least worthy of notice. If I were asked what has this alliance effected, I could not better answer, than by giving some account of what I witnessed at the above meeting: the meeting was composed of members, ministers, and other persons, probably, from all the churches in Great Britain and Ireland, and a few from other places; its exercises were highly devotional, consisting of prayer, praise, in the use of the psalms, in part, reading of the word of God. These exercises were from day to day continued, being mixed with well prepared essays on important subjects, addresses and discussions, in rather a conversational form, on all, or most of the interesting topics, belonging to the church, in Christian or heathen lands, touching Jews, Gentiles, Mahomedans, or Papists. To give a minute account of its proceedings, would do more than make a letter of itself. This I shall not attempt. Suffice it to say, that the devotional exercises were highly spiritual; that the discussions, essays, and addresses were enlightened, practical, and sound; that the sentiment or feeling every where manifested, was that of love; that the admission was every where made, or felt, that this or that church was not "the church" but a church, and that all the churches together, only made the "true church," and that the end of the church's existence in the world, cannot be effected by any given one, established or not established. The conversion of sinners, the destruction of the work of Satan, and the reformation of a sin-ruined world, can only be effected under God, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all the churches, thereby bringing them nearer to himself, and consequently nearer to one another. These, and similar sentiments, the Alliance exhibited, from the commencement to the end of the exercises. On witnessing the interesting labours, one could not but say, "It is good to be here;" and the thought passed through the mind, that if, as Thomas Jefferson has said, it is worthy of a passage across the Atlantic to see

the National Bridge of Virginia, how much more is it worthy of one to witness and to participate in the services of the Alliance; and although it has not done anything towards the actual union of the different portions of our divided Zion, yet it has done much, as a fore-runner, to hasten the day, when the watchmen shall lift up the voice, when they shall sing together; and when they shall see eye to eye, the Lord having again brought Zion.

But I hasten to bring this letter, already too long, to a close, by referring to the Reformed Presbyterian Church in England: her existence is feeble, having an organization only in three or more places. In London, the Rev. J. Cunningham, LL. D., a missionary of our church in Scotland, is labouring among the Jews, and serving as a temporary pastor to the church in that city. In this excellent man is found more literature, science, and theology than fall to the lot of most men; he is an embodiment of human knowledge; in labours most abundant, and it is believed not without profit to Jew and to Gentile. It is greatly to be desired that he could be allowed to pursue his more immediate work, and that the church be supplied with a suitable pastor to manage its congregational or pastoral duties. Liverpool, however, is the place to which the attention of the church should at present be especially directed; it is the great commercial city of Great Britain; to it many are betaking themselves for business of different kinds; in it are found, every month or week, Christian brethren from the churches, in the Old and New World; in it the different denominations of Great Britain have efficient churches; and the city is pretty extensively leavened with the influence of the gospel; here the Reformed Presbyterian Church has a small yet valuable organization; it needs foreign aid, in order to give it efficient and permanent existence, and we are persuaded, if the condition of the church were fully known and the importance of the place duly considered, a united effort would be made by the entire church to give it the aid requisite for its more perfect organization. Sure I am, it would be the delight of the American churches, to give the assistance in their power to sustain the banner of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in that important city. Will not the brethren in Scotland and Ireland see to it, that their church have a place in that important city, to which their sons are betaking themselves, and where there is danger of conformity to the world, or of desertion from the cause and testimony of their fathers?

H. M'MILLAN.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

OPENING OF THE CHURCH, NAPPAN, N. S.

Rev. Sir,—On the first Sabbath current, our house of worship at Nappan, was opened and dedicated to the living and true God. The Lord granted us a very mild day. The congregation was very large, for our community. The subject of discourse—the church in her foundation, material means of building, and stability. Text: “And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” It is to God due to say, that both strength and liberty were granted to the speaker, while the attention and conduct of the audience were most creditable to the place, and very becoming the house of God.

The house is a commodious and comfortable erection; 44 by 34 feet, without a gallery. The pulpit is a plain, neat and handsome article of the desk kind. The wood is neither rosewood, walnut nor mahogany. The carpet is not Brussels, but the sofa is somewhat elastic after all. There are not twenty members in the whole of Nappan district. Of course but few to bear the weight of the building. But with Joseph Coales and William Keiver at their head, the work went on with energy. Of my collectings among Dr. McLeod's people, I put into this erection one hundred and sixty dollars, for which I hold the receipt. There will yet be some debt against the house, which may cause the pews to be sold, and this is very injurious to the support of the ministry afterwards. This is the second erection opened since I was last in Philadelphia. In Mc Cann, where there are only three members, a small house is up, but not finished. The weight of it is chiefly on one man. At Bay De Verte, where there are only seven members yet, (a growing place,) their house is water tight, but in *statu quo*, for want of means: I was able to give them a small portion of my gatherings. Mr. Alford threw in, very generously, his mite. In Sackville, where we have only fifteen members, extending over a greater number of miles, the work of building is commenced. Here, then, are four or five houses, which have been going on for some time past, in a field of very great extent, but the membership of which vast field, to build and support these houses, (and they are all needed,) is not equal, by a considerable number, to that of some other of the congregations of the mission field here. In the new house at Hobart, the Lord's supper was dispensed on the 15th of October last. There were some five or six of an increase, and two very interesting cases of adult baptism. The season was solemn, and very refreshing. Throughout the whole year, two of those stations have to be attended in the same day; sometimes ten miles between services, even in the shortest days in winter; and "Hitherto hath the Lord helped:"

"My cry I will cause to ascend
Unto the Lord most high;
To God who doth all things for me
Perform most perfectly."

The Hawey opening and call which I forward at this time, it is of great importance, we should immediately attend to it. But I trust the church will not expect any man, especially an old one, and one so long in so heavy a service, to do impossibilities. Blessed be God, however, I have been enabled to bear the enormous labour of this winter, so far, as well as I have done that of any winter for the last fifteen years. The goodness of God to me has been most manifest, during the last three weeks. In that time, I have travelled between two and three hundred miles, (the travelling bad,) and preached and lectured fifteen or sixteen times, several of these lectures more than two hours long, in very crowded houses, both at night, and during the day. There are now, throughout the whole field, really ten houses actually erected, though not all finished, and another in progress. "The Lord hath done great things for us."

A. C.

(For the Banner of the Covenant.)

MORTUARY MEMORIAL.

The following quaint but affecting inscription was copied from a marble tablet which marks the resting-place of many of the martyrs of the covenant, in Grey Friars' Churchyard, Edinburgh. It tells its own story "of those of whom the world was not worthy," who "were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God."

"Halt, passengers! take heed what you do see.
This tomb doth show for what some men did die.
Here lies interr'd the dust of those who stood
'Gainst perjury, resisting unto blood;
Adhering to the covenants, and laws
Establishing the same; which was the cause
Their lives were sacrific'd unto the lust
Of prelatists' abjured. Though here their dust
Lies mixt with murderers and other crew,
Whom justice justly did to death pursue:
But as for them no cause was to be found.
Constant and steadfast, zealous, witnessing
For the prerogatives of Christ their King,
Which truths were sealed by famous Guthrie's head;
And all along to Mr. Renwick's blood.
They did endure the wrath of enemies,
Reproaches, torments, deaths, and injuries;
But yet they're those who from such troubles came,
And now triumph in glory with the Lamb.

"From May 27th, 1661, that the most noble Marquis of Argyle was beheaded; No. 17, Feb'ry, 1688, that Mr. James Renwick suffered; were one way or other Murdered and Destroyed for the same Cause, about Eighteen thousand; of whom were executed at Edinburgh about one hundred of Noblemen, Gentlemen, Ministers, and others—noble martyrs for Jesus Christ. The most of them lie here." N.

THE WORK AND THE MEN IN INDIA.

Scarce a month passes over without bringing to light some new feature in the great work in progress in India. These indications, though they might escape the observation of the men of the world, are to the Christian's eye fraught with great promise. They are tokens to the spiritual man of the universality and hopefulness of the movement. It is but one poor solitary heathen, it may be, who has been rescued from destruction; still, in the conversion of that man, the Christian sees a power at work that is able to convert the whole of India. His hopes take hold, not so much on the stage which the work has reached, as on the fact that it has begun, and is going forward.

Our readers must have remarked of late, that numerous baptisms were occurring at all our stations in India. This, which is the distinguishing feature of the work during the past year, is a most hopeful indication. It shows that these baptisms are not the result of mere local efforts, but that they grow out of a state of feeling common to all India, and are produced by a gracious Power, which is brooding, as it were, over all that continent. Another cheering symptom is the number of conversions from the Hindus of high caste. Of this our readers will find a remarkable instance among the Mahomedans, a class which has yielded hitherto few converts. This month we have the pleasant duty of recording that the first sheaf has been gathered in from fields which have been barren till now, though in long years they had been the scene of patient and prayerful labour, as Chinsurah and Culna. We trust these first fruits, like those appointed by the law to be offered in the temple of old, are the pledges of an early and plenteous harvest.

How often is the hope of the Christian the derision of the world! How often is his hope for eternity, and how often, too, are his hopes for time, pronounced to be visionary! A man of the world looking at these converts scattered in twos and threes throughout

India, would account the joy of the missionary on their account, and the hopes he builds upon them, immoderate and extravagant! How long, at that rate, will it be till India is converted? would he ask. He knows neither the power of Him who converts, nor the power of him who is converted. To save a soul from death is no small matter; but when the Hindu or Mahomedan idolater is brought to Christ, not only is a soul saved from death, but a *power* is called into existence which will be felt far and wide, and the beneficial influence of which will be lasting as eternity. Who was it that Andrew led to Jesus? His own brother. But that brother was Simon Peter, to whom was given the honour of opening the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles. A Christian woman on her way to chapel, accosted JOHN WILLIAMS, and asked him to accompany her. She doubtless aimed at nothing higher than the saving of his soul. And yet that was but the least of the consequences growing out of what she did. She had brought to Jesus one who was to be the apostle of civilization and eternal life to the savage islanders of the Pacific, whose name was destined to become identified with some of the most distinguished triumphs which the gospel has achieved in these modern times. When Rajah-gopaul and Venkataramiah were converted, how many, many thousand of poor Hindus were in reality rescued from eternal death!

But while the work is eternal, not so the human instrumentality by which it is carried on. That instrumentality tires and needs to be rested—wears out, and needs to be renewed. Of this we have but too many proofs in our letters for this month. The noble band whose hands laid the foundations of the spiritual temple in India are at this moment sadly borne down by illness; Dr. Duff is slowly rallying; but the pleasure which this gives us is lessened by the fact that Mr. S. Mackay of Calcutta, is obliged to proceed again to Australia for his health, at the urgent desire of his physicians. Mr. Smith, of the same place, is under the necessity of coming home on leave of absence for a year. Mr. Braidwood cannot return this season to Madras, his physicians having intimated the impropriety of his doing so; and though Mr. M. Mackintosh at Madras is recovering, it is not so rapidly as to give assurance that he will be able very speedily to bring his accustomed vigour to the discharge of his work. The crippling of our agency at this crisis, when baptisms are becoming so frequent, and constant appeals are reaching us for more labourers, has a loud voice in it. The church certainly ought to regard it as a special call from God to consider how far she is doing her duty to provide labourers for this great field. Is she doing what she might in the way of prayer, and of providing the means for the support of such an agency as is urgently demanded at this moment in India?

REV. DR. DUFF.

We are sure that our readers will gladly welcome, and earnestly peruse the following letter from that devoted missionary of the cross, the Rev. Dr. Duff. By his almost superhuman labours in the cause of Christ in this land, and the home of his fathers, as well as in far-distant, benighted India, he has so impaired his naturally strong constitution, that it has been considered necessary for him to recruit in the sunny regions of the south of France, and there religiously to abstain from any, even the least exertion either of body or mind. There he now is, and we are glad to learn that he is slowly experiencing the much needed benefits of a change of air and entire rest. For some time no intelligence has been received from him, both on account of his enfeebled condition, and the express prohibition of his physician, who was of the opinion that any effort of the intellect would retard his recovery and be positively dangerous. Now that by the goodness of the Lord he has somewhat recovered, he has written this characteristic letter to his dear friend, Mr. Stuart. It is full of that spirit of humility, ardent piety, entire submissiveness to the will of God, and heartfelt love to Christ, which should distinguish every genuine Christian, and which the writer of this letter possesses in so remarkable a degree. How pathetically does he speak of sin, how strong seems to be his sense of its enormity, its "venomousness" as he forcibly expresses it. How rich appear to be his consolations! Will not all of God's people, as they read this letter, strive to imbibe the spirit of this earnest, though now suffering saint of God, and pray that the God of life and health may restore again to the church, and to the field of his self-sacrificing labour, one who has been so endowed with the graces of the Spirit?

Biarrit, Basses Pyrenees, France, Jan. 24th, 1855.

My Dear Friend.—About this time last year I was in Edinburgh, in the midst of preparations for crossing the Atlantic, and not without the fond expectation that, by this time, I should be addressing you from the banks of the Ganges. O, the short-sightedness of man! Instead of being in the high places of the field, helping to lay siege, under the unfurled banner of our adored Immanuel, to the stupendous citadel of the hoariest and most consolidated of this world's heathenisms, here I am, a helpless exile, in one of the most secluded corners of all Christendom, sore wounded in my most vital organ—the organ of thought and feeling—and consequently, for the present, bereft of the power of action and utterance. But as you already know the very peculiar nature of my case, I shall say no more. It is the Lord's will, and naught remains for me but, by faith and prayer, to enter into the heart of the sublime expression of resignation, 'Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.'

In my present situation I daily look out and gaze at the waters of the mightiest bay of that ocean which severs—no, rather as a highway, unites—the Eastern and Western worlds. I never look at them without thinking of my strange passage across, and of the strangely extraordinary reception given to me by the warm-hearted people of God on the other side. And, by a sort of unconscious instinct, I find myself everlastingly musing and conning, in words like these, 'O that I had the wings of a dove, that I could fly over these rolling billows, and mingle, were it but for a moment, with the gathering throng, and be cheered by the kindly smiling countenances of yonder beloved friends.' But the wish is vain. Not so, however, the sentiment whence it springs. O, no. The sentiment is one of the deepest, intensest gratitude to God, and under God, to his devoted servants of every denomination in America, who were pleased to receive me with a cordiality as unexpected as it was wholly unprecedented. And I only mourn that hitherto it has not been in my power to manifest the ineradicable feelings of my heart, in any way either worthy or commensurate.

The scene, especially in your own house, on the night of my arrival—truly a night of storms—grows on me in wondrousness the oftener I look back upon it. To all the friends who there met, please present, as opportunity offers, my warmest and most grateful remembrances. Tell them that my unceasing prayer is, that 'grace, mercy, and peace' may be increasingly 'multiplied unto them all.'

Fain would I now go on, and write you at length about many subjects of absorbing interest in connexion with the cause of the Redeemer throughout the world at large. But, as yet I dare not venture,—as yet I feel very much like a disabled man attempting to walk on a single toe. For, though much better than I was months ago, and, through God's blessing, slightly though slowly convalescent, I am still unable to take any liberties with my head. It has been a terrible conflict and struggle with me to learn absolute submission to the will of God—to be content to stand still, be dumb, and wait on in silence. But the conflict has been beneficial—praised be God—to my own soul. It has brought me into nearer contact than ever with the high and the holy and the Sovereign One. It has given me some awful glimpses of his holiness and supremacy—some frightful glimpses, at the same time, of the venomousness of sin, and the horrible abominableness of my own heart by nature, and of the remains of 'the old man' still there, in so far as they are not yet subdued by grace. I now see more clearly than ever, how every soul, in its fallen, unregenerate state, carries about with it all the elements of a terrible hell—elements which, if only let loose, without restraints of providence or grace, would tumultuate it into all the restless tossings of the fiery lake. And I can now enter more than ever into the burning significance of the apostle's words, 'O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'—And thus trembling with very amazement and joy, on account of the *complete deliverance through Jesus Christ*, I begin to feel, in a way I never did before, the momentousness of the obligation under which I am laid to *be, to do, to suffer* whatever his will may be. I begin to perceive, or rather to feel, a newness as well as fullness of meaning in the apostle's exclamation, '*And ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*'

Alas, alas, how little is this solemn exhortation heeded in our day, even by the great bulk of professing Christians! What a spirit of innate selfishness, self-pleasing, self-indulgence, self-luxuriating is abroad! Where, O where is the self-denying, self-sacrificing, self-crucifying spirit that brought the Lord of glory to the cross—and breathed and burned through the souls of apostles, martyrs, and confessors

in the primitive ages! Would to God, that in your great country, and in mine, one and another, and another would rise up in every congregation, of such self-consuming zeal in the cause of Christ, as to energize the surrounding myriads into self-denying action—and thus speedily constitute a great army, before whose onward march the hosts of Satan in every land would be scattered as chaff before the whirlwind!—The world, as a whole, is still in possession of the arch enemy. There he has been intrenching himself for ages, aided with all the enginery which a superhuman sagacity, set on edge by a superhuman malice, can devise. And is the Christian church so drenched in the Lethean pool as to suppose that this gigantic foe is to be scared or driven from his more than adamantine intrenchments, by the feeble and almost random blows of a few straggling soldiers—isolated and scattered, at vast intervals, around his vast frowning battlements? O, that all who profess to love the Saviour, would rise up as one man, and swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that, at whatever cost, whether of personal service or sacrifice of substance, they would, in the name and strength of their living Head and King, go forth, and rest not day nor night, till the earth from pole to pole, resounds with songs of deliverance!

But, however reluctantly, I must pause; as certain distressing sensations are beginning to remind me that my fragile bow has already been bent rather too far.—And now, dear friend, remember me most affectionately to Mrs. S., Mrs. D., and all the young members of your family, not forgetting the domestics who ministered so kindly to my wants when under your hospitable roof; also, your excellent pastor—my noble-minded fellow-traveller, Mr. P., if within reach—with the whole circle of beloved friends, whose acquaintance I was privileged to make when amongst you, and whose Christian demeanour has left indelible impressions on my memory; including the indomitably persevering ladies who would have me plead the cause of their city mission, in the prosperity of which I shall ever take the deepest interest. Fare you well, dearly beloved friend.

Yours ever affectionately, ALEXANDER DUFF.

THE SHORTER CATECHISM FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS.

BY REV. DR. MORGAN.

This Catechism for such a purpose, is unrivalled by any human composition. It is, perhaps, the most perfect and beautiful specimen of analysis ever presented to the English reader. It publishes the sublimest truths in language at once plain, simple, forcible, and eloquent; and your familiarity with it will enable you easily to accompany me, while I sketch its mighty and exalted topics in the order in which they are presented in its brief pages. It is opened with the sublime but simple sentence, that ‘Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever.’ That end being proposed, the rule by which we are directed to seek it is added—‘The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.’ The contents of these scriptures are thus announced—‘What man is required to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.’ The grand division of the Catechism is into these two parts—First, what we are to believe concerning God. He is described in his being, perfections, unity, Godhead, decrees, and works. His works become a fresh starting point; and these are traced in creation, providence and redemption. As redemption is the grand theme to be unfolded, the other works are passed over, and it is made the exclusive topic. The fall of man, and the sinner’s need of redemption, are laid down as a fundamental principle. The source of redemption is traced to the sovereign mercy of God. The execution of it is shown to have been committed to the Son of God. The Redeemer is described in his person, his offices, and the history of his humiliation and exaltation. Redemption having been thus unfolded in its necessity, source, and author, the way in which the sinner obtains an interest in it is then set forth. This is shown to be by the agency of the Holy Spirit working faith in the soul, thereby bringing it to Christ, and uniting it with him. In virtue of that union, the benefits of redemption are shown to follow. The sinner is thus justified, adopted, and sanctified. The blessings that accompany or flow from these in time are rehearsed; and they are described in their consummation at the death and resurrection of the body. This is the system of doctrine which we are to believe; and it is followed by a statement of what the believer is required to do. That is presented in an exposition of the law, as it is contained in the Ten Commandments, unfolding, with singular comprehensiveness and perspicuity, what is forbidden and what is required, while, at the same time, the reasons for the one and the other are appropriately annexed. To complete the analysis, the Catechism is extended to a third department, explaining what may be termed the *internal and external means of salvation*—the former comprehending faith and repentance; the latter the word, sacraments, and prayer. Such is the Shorter Catechism.

To every one who has a mind capable of comprehending, or a taste susceptible of enjoying, a specimen of intellectual analysis, I would commend it for study and admiration. In it the Sabbath-school teacher is furnished with the happiest human instrument for the intellectual training of his pupils. What an object to put it into their hands, and persevere in the use of it, until its scheme of doctrine and platform of duty are thoroughly comprehended! This is an achievement worthy of the most ardent pursuit; and the teacher who has carried his pupils successfully to the end of it has taught them a lesson of intellectual power that will serve them for good as long as they live. He that understands the Shorter Catechism is no mean theologian; and yet this is an attainment to which any ordinary class may be conducted, if the teacher is only competent to put his pupils on the right path. Let him understand the Catechism himself, and he will not fail to make his class understand it also.

PIETY AND SCHOLARSHIP.

By Rev. Dr. Gould, Edinburgh.

True piety will enable you to appreciate the ends to which all your studies are to be directed. These are the instruction of the people of God and the conversion of sinful men. If you feel that these ends are unspeakably momentous, if you know the worth of the soul, and tremble under a sense of the responsibility incurred in the preaching of the gospel, no learning, no gift, no attainment, but you will covet in order that you may become able ministers of the New Testament. You will seek to be in learning, learned as Moses; in wisdom, wise as Solomon; in eloquence, eloquent as Apollos; in composition, weighty as Paul. Seeing you are to operate on the springs of action, to touch the heart, to lay the pride of reason in the dust, and take the conscience by storm, you will do much to cultivate the comparatively humble art of addressing a multitude. The pulpit, by God's own ordinance, is to be your chief sphere of influence. Eloquence, therefore, is a gift you will do well to cultivate; and by eloquence I understand, not a power of talk, not a glib facility of utterance, but the ability to operate on other minds most effectively by the disclosure of your own. And if your materials be few, if to speak is only to betray the scantiness of your mental furniture, you can wield no influence on an assembled multitude. The gift is sometimes made the subject of a sneer; it is better to be instructive than to be eloquent, we are sometimes told by those who seem not to know what they mean, nor whereof they affirm. You cannot be eloquent unless you are instructive, and you cannot be instructive unless you are eloquent. Eloquence is thus disparaged because misunderstood. It is confounded with the mere luxuriance of an untamed imagination, and a fertility in glittering images. I need say no more in refutation of the error, than that the oration to which all literature and all criticism give the palm as the finest ever composed by uninspired man, contains but one simile, and that couched in two simple words. Not that true eloquence absolutely repudiates the resources of the fancy any more than the powers of reason.

It resembles light, an element in which every colour has its due place, and contributes unseen to the general effect,—not the azure of the sky, not the yellow gold of autumn, not the splendours of a July evening when the sun sinks in the west, like a Cæsar composing himself to rest in his robes of purple, but the essence and blended glory of them all. It is by the foolishness of preaching that men are to be saved, but it is not by foolish preaching. And surely to pluck the soul as a brand from the burning, to convert it from the error of its ways and lead it in the way everlasting—to build up the church of God in that knowledge which is eternal life—to hasten the blessed spectacle of a world recovered universally to its God, and rejoicing in the sunshine of his smile, is an office to which all genius and learning, and labour and time may well be consecrated—an office for which the utmost preparations may well be made—an office of which the more we understand the importance, the more will we feel our unfitness for it—the more will we labour in preparation for it—the more will we pray for the Spirit, without whom all gifts are in vain.

Let me deal with you frankly. It is to me no good sign when a youth is unduly eager to be licensed, when he would anticipate the proper time for receiving license, when he takes it kind if he is helped over an examination, or allowed to slip easily through a presbytery, or by any means to get license sooner than perhaps he ought. I stand in doubt of him. Has he counted the cost? Does he understand the awfulness of the functions which he would discharge? Does he know what it is to preach the gospel? If I were permitted to retrace my course in life, there are three things which I would amend in my curriculum of theological study. I would endeavour, if consistent with other duties, to prolong my course of training and preparation, as all too short for the weighty work now on my hands; I would abridge the occupations foreign to my professional studies in which I suffered myself, when in your circumstances, to be entangled; and lastly, I would curb the passion for precocious display to which every young heart

is addicted. Let me counsel you to manifest a sacred obstinacy—a truly Scottish *dourness* in resisting all temptation to snatch at a premature notoriety. Do not seek early attainments so much as great attainments. Seduced by any little fame you may acquire for the former, you may miss the richer guerdon which awaits the latter. The time occupied in making known your attainments will be better occupied in adding to them. Like John the Baptist, be in the desert till the day of your showing unto Israel. Till then, “*qui bene latuit, bene vixit.*”

Pursue this course, and you will acquire distinction as certainly as the sun is best proved to shine by the evidence of its own light. What is better, you will be useful—useful for the highest ends of blessing. There was a time when a British army lay cooped up in inglorious safety behind a triple line of intrenchment near the rock of Lisbon. No influence could induce the general to depart from his Fabian policy. The remonstrances of the nation which he came to save did not move him. The rebuke of his own nation, and the repeated disapproval of the ministry under which he served, could not cloud the sagacity of his foresight, or shake the firm purpose of his iron will. The derision of the enemy sounding up from the valley crowned and topped by his palisades, was equally ineffectual; and equally vain the reported taunt of the greatest commander of the age, that the British leopard would soon be chased into the sea. There he lay biding his time, calm as marble, till his eagle eye saw that the crisis of his own danger was past, and his time had fully come, and then he broke in one fiery bolt of war on the startled ranks of Massena, and you trace his subsequent progress in one uninterrupted march of success and victory, till he gave peace to a distracted continent on the plains of Waterloo. You are to be soldiers in a noble warfare; take a lesson from the children of this world, often wiser in their generation than the children of light. Husbanding your time, and “*hiving wisdom in each studious hour,*” you will come upon the church, not with the sudden vividness of a meteor soon lost in night, but trimmed into enduring lustre by Him whose walks are amidst the golden candlesticks, and ere long mingling in the promised apocalypse of glory, you will shine with the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.—*Dr. W. H. Goold: an Address to Students of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.*

THE SIN AND FOLLY OF SCOLDING.

“Fret not thyself to do evil.”—Psalm xxxvii. 2.

1. *It is a Sin against God.*—It is an evil, and only evil, and that continually. David understood both human nature and the law of God. He says, “Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.” That is, never fret or scold, for it is always a sin. If you cannot speak without fretting or scolding, keep silence.

2. *It destroys affection.*—No one ever did, ever can, or ever will love an habitual fretter, fault-finder, or scolder. Husbands, wives, children, relatives, or domestics, have no affection for peevish, fretful fault-finders. Few tears are shed over the graves of such. Persons of high moral principle may tolerate them—may bear with them. But they cannot love them more than the sting of nettles or the noise of mosquitoes. Many a man has been driven to the tavern, and to dissipation, by a peevish, fretful wife. Many a wife has been made miserable by a peevish, fretful husband.

3. *It is the bane of domestic happiness.*—A fretful, peevish, complaining fault-finder in a family is like the continual chafing of an inflamed sore. Wo to the man, woman, or child, who is exposed to the influence of such a temper in another.—Nine-tenths of all domestic trials and unhappiness spring from this source. Mrs. A. is of this temperament. She wonders her husband is not more fond of her company. That her children give her so much trouble. That domestics do not like to work for her. That she cannot secure the good will of young people. The truth is, she is peevish and fretful. Children fear her, and do not love her. She never gained the affections of a young person, nor never will, till she leaves off fretting.

4. *It defeats the end of family government.*—Good family government is the blending authority with affection, so as to secure respect and love. Indeed, it is the great secret of managing young people. Now your fretters may inspire fear, but they always make two faults where they correct one. Scolding at a child, fretting at a child, taunting at a child, treating a child as though it had no feeling, inspires dread and dislike, and fosters those very dispositions, from which many of the faults of childhood proceed. Mr. G. and Mrs. F. are of this class. Their children are made to mind; but how? Mrs. F. frets and scolds her children. She is severe enough upon their faults. She seems to watch them in order to find fault. She sneers at them. Treats them as though they had no feelings. She seldom gives them a command without a threat and a long running fault-finding commentary. When

she chides, it is not done in a dignified manner. She raises her voice, puts on a cross look, threatens, strikes them, pinches their ears, slaps their heads, &c. The children cry, pout, sulk, and poor Mrs. F. has to do her work over pretty often. Then she will find fault with her husband because he does not fall in with her ways, or chime with her as chorus.

5. *Fretting and scolding make hypocrites.*—As a fretter never receives confidence and affection, so no one likes to tell them anything disagreeable, and thus procure for themselves a fretting. Now, children conceal as much as they can from such persons. They cannot make up their minds to be frank and open-hearted. So husbands conceal from their wives, and wives from their husbands. For a man may brave a lion, but he likes not to come in contact with nettles and mosquitoes.

6. *It destroys one's peace of mind.*—The more one frets the more he may. A fretter will always have enough to fret at, especially if he or she has the bump of order and neatness largely developed. Something will always be out of place. There will always be some dirt somewhere. Others will not eat right, look right, talk right. And fretters are generally so selfish as to have no regard for any one's comfort, but their own.

7. *It is a mark of a vulgar disposition.*—Some persons have so much gall in their dispositions, are so selfish, that they have no regard to the feelings of others. All things must be done to please them. They make their husbands, wives, children, domestics, the conductors by which their spleen and ill nature are discharged. Wo to the children who are exposed to such influences. It makes them callous and unfeeling, and when they grow up they pursue the same course with their own children, or those intrusted to their management, and thus the race of fretters is perpetuated. Any person who is in the habit of fretting or sneering, taunting their husbands, wives, children, or domestics, shows either a bad disposition or else they are ill-bred people that are guilty of such things.—*Ep. Rec.*

CARD PLAYING.

“Why do Christians object to card playing?”

1. *First on account of its avowedly worldly character.*

By a sort of universal verdict, it has been set down as a purely worldly amusement. On what account this has been done we are not prepared to say. But it is so. Universally, card-playing is taken as a symbol of worldliness, gayety and trifling. This is not the case with chess, draughts, or even bagatelle. This view of the amusement is, with judicious Christians, quite enough to prevent their indulging in it. A line must be drawn somewhere to distinguish the church from the world, and one of these lines—and a very proper one it is—has been drawn round those amusements which bear the character as above. To step over that line is, in the estimation of the truly good, an inconsistency and error; and Christians wishing to preserve a conscience void of offence, and give offence to none, are careful not to err in this respect. This is in perfect keeping with apostolic precept and example.

2. *A second reason lies in the extremely trifling character of cards.*

The game is one of the most silly, unmeaning, and trifling of amusements, calling forth no deep thought, no skill worth the name, and so far as either the party themselves are concerned or others, attaining no kind of good. This is different in some other games that could be named. In chess, for instance, there is needed an application of mind, and an exercise of skill, that have a beneficial effect on the minds of those who engage in it, and which render it less a recreation than a healthful mental exercise.

3. A third ground of objection is found in the completely chance character of the game.

To all purely chance games, Christians generally take strong objections, and view them as of such a nature as to forbid devout persons indulging in them. None can deny the chance feature of cards, and hence it lies open to all the common objections of chance games in general.

4. The fourth argument against cards is the gambling associated with it.

It is true this might be omitted; but when is it? and what would a game of cards be without it? Ask any avowed card-players whether they would think them worth playing if no odds were at stake, and if it be not this which gives them a zest they could not, from their own trifling and insipid character, possibly possess. Take away the stakes, and you would find cards all but universally scouted as the most empty and unsatisfactory of amusements.

5. *The associations of card-playing are no mean argument against it, with right feeling persons.*

The disputation with which it stands usually connected; the ruin it has brought on many a youth; the domestic misery of which it has been the frightful parent; the wicked men with which it seems to unite you; are all, with other associations, of such a nature as to prevent truly virtuous minds allowing themselves in its indulgence.

6. But with true Bible-taught Christians, those who form their Christian morality not from the lax notions of this lax and worldly age, but from the precepts and principles of holy writ, card-playing is felt to be so incompatible with so much laid down in the word of God, as to be utterly removed from the list of their amusements. Take such precepts as those that require us to do all that we do to the glory of God; to redeem the time; to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; to preserve a conscience void of offence toward God and man; to be separate from sinners; to come out from the world; to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; and others of like character. The spirit and tendency of all this is, and must be, counter to such amusements as cards, and hence Christians very properly object to them as a fit amusement at their social gatherings. [Ex. P.]

Obituary.

DIED at his residence in Perry County, Illinois, on the 2d of October, 1854, Mr. Thomas Blair, in the 53d year of his age. He was born in Chester District, South Carolina, and lived there until the fourteenth year of his age, and then emigrated with his parents to Lincoln County, Tennessee, where he lived until after his marriage; when becoming impressed with the difficulty of training up a family in the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, surrounded as they were, with the vicious examples of *secularity*, he removed to Perry County, Illinois. His parents were consistent members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and trained up their children in the fear of the Lord. God blessed those instructions to the subject of this memoir, and in early youth he gave evidence that he had passed from death unto life, and that he had tasted of pardoning mercy, and redeeming love. He made a profession of religion in his 17th year, in connexion with the church of his fathers,—in the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation of Lincoln County, Tennessee. In the 25th year of his age, he was elected and ordained a ruling elder in that congregation, then under the care of the Rev. E. Cooper. After his removal to Illinois he discharged efficiently the duties of his office, in the congregation of Bethel, under the care of the Rev. Samuel Wylie, and after its organization in the congregation of Concord, under the care of the Rev. M. Harshaw, until the time of his death. In the last named congregation, he acted as superintendent of the sabbath school for a number of years, and took a deep interest in instructing the youth in the way of life and salvation through a crucified Redeemer. Mr. Blair's intellectual powers were of a high order, and well cultivated. Firmness, compassion and love, were harmoniously blended in his character and life. His religion was warm and comprehensive; and although a firm "covenanter" in principle, he rejoiced in the progress of pure religion under all forms and names. He had a strong desire for the fulfilment of the Redeemer's prayer, "that his followers might be one, and that thus the world might believe that the Father had sent him." He loved the ordinances of the gospel, and experienced great pleasure and satisfaction in meeting with his friends and brethren in the house of God, and often found the Saviour present in those ordinances. The benevolent movements of the day—such as Sabbath Schools, Bible Societies, Temperance Associations, Missionary Societies, and last, but not least, the cause of the poor down-trodden slave; all found in him a consistent advocate. His influence in the family, the school, the church, and the state, was always exerted in behalf of virtue, truth, religion, and right. He loved in deed and in truth, as well as in word and tongue. During his last illness, (which was disease of the liver, and swelling of the spleen,) he suffered much, but manifested great patience and resignation to the will of his Heavenly Father. Calmly he met the "king of terrors," and overcame him by the "blood of the Lamb." His views of the future were unclouded, and of the most cheering character. The gospel of the grace of God raised his thoughts high above the dark shadows of time, and afforded him glorious prospects beyond the grave. In the midst of bodily pain and suffering, he desired his friends who were standing around his dying bed, to join with him in singing the songs of Zion, such as the 23d, 32d,

51st, and similar psalms, and while those precious songs were being sung, we have no doubt the glorious Redeemer sent his holy angels to minister to his dying servant, as an heir of salvation. A few hours before his death, in answer to a question proposed by his beloved pastor in regard to his future prospects, he replied, "I know that so soon as my soul will be separated from my body, it will immediately pass into glory, and my body will rest in the grave until the resurrection; when it and my soul shall be again united and made like unto Christ's glorious body." In his death the congregation feel as if one of the pillars had fallen. His family and friends have lost an affectionate husband, a kind father, and a faithful friend; but they mourn not as those who have no hope. Another sinner has been saved by grace, another jewel has been added to the Saviour's crown, and another harp is sounding forth the praises of the glorious Redeemer.

"Mark thou the perfect, and behold
The man of uprightness;
Because that surely of this man
The latter end is peace."

Perry County, Illinois, January 13th, 1855.

N. N. R.

Editorial.

THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

By a notice on the cover of the "Banner," it will be seen that the present term of the Seminary expires on the 6th instant. It has been in successful operation since the first of November last; and though the number of students has been small, the closing exercises, we doubt not, will show to the Superintendents that the labours have been abundant. We have frequently visited the Seminary during the term, and have been gratified at seeing the very evident and rapid improvement made by the students. The Professors have spared neither time nor labour. We would respectfully remind the Church at large that the salaries of the Professors are now due. By recent action of the Trustees, Robert Steenson, Esq., was appointed Treasurer. Will not the various congregations at once forward their respective contributions? All moneys for the Seminary to be sent to Robert Steenson, Esq., 298 Frankford Road, Philadelphia.

Notices of New Publications.

THE CHRISTIAN WORLD UNMASKED: By John Berridge, A. M., with a Life of the Author: By Dr. Guthrie. Boston: Gould and Lincoln. Pp. 207.

The author of this work was no common man; and he has given to the world an evidence of his power and character, for we doubt if any can read it without its making him a better man. Its teachings and its spirit are worthy of a world-wide circulation.

CASES OF CONSCIENCE: By Messrs. Pike and Hayward. Published by Smith & English, 36 North Sixth Street; and Wm. S. Young, 173 Race Street, Phila. Pp. 432.

This is an old work in a new dress. It has stood the test of time, and increases in its influence on the minds of its readers as they advance in its perusal. It is not only a "book for the million," but a book for the world. Every man has a conscience. Let him purchase these "Cases of Conscience;" and while the trial is being investigated at the bar of God's word, he will find in it an aid for the settling of his difficulties, of no common order.

THE PSALMS IN METRE. Being the Scots' Metrical Version, with some Amendments, chiefly verbal. Published by Wm. S. Young, Philadelphia. Pp. 384.

This is, as presented in the title page, an amended edition of the Psalms of David, as now in use by the psalm-singing churches in our country, by a committee of the Associate Synod. An amendment is undoubtedly a desideratum here with all these churches. Whether the committee have accomplished this, time must tell. They have given some additional metres, and some improvements. They have been careful, also, so far as we have been able to examine, to keep close by the original.

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The Banner of the Covenant

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